

Alternatives To Declawing Your Cat

Solutions For Cats That Claw

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Removing the cat's claws does not have to be the solution to clawed carpets and furnishings.

Many people find declawing cats inhumane. If the cat is allowed to keep its claws there are ways to prevent it from destroying expensive carpets and furnishings. Clawing is an instinctual behavior and used to mark territory. Cats are not purposely being unruly when they claw furniture or drapes, they are just doing what comes naturally.

6 Alternatives To The Declaw Procedure:

1. Sticky Paws – Sticky Paws is a clear, adhesive product that is applied to the inappropriate areas your cat likes to scratch. When applied cats do not like the sticky texture and stop using the furniture as a scratching post. It can be applied, and removed, to most surfaces without causing damage but it is recommended to test on an inconspicuous area first.

2. Soft Paws – Plastic nail caps called Soft Paws can be applied over the cat's nails. The nails are first trimmed short then the plastic caps are glued on - very similar to a women's fake fingernails. These caps are soft and have a blunt end so the cat can naturally scratch without causing damage. If the caps cannot be applied at home most veterinarians will provide the service for a minimal fee. The caps will typically stay on for 4 - 8 weeks.

3. Training – Many laugh when they think about training their cat, but it can be done. Indirect punishment works best for cats. Never strike your cat; this will damage your relationship.

Instead try making a loud sound that will distract or scare your cat from scratching. An aluminum can with a few pennies in it makes a great noise maker. When the cat starts to scratch shake the can. The cat will start to associate the noise with the scratching and stop the behavior.

Another training method is using a water squirter. Squirt the cat with water whenever it starts to scratch in an inappropriate place. Again, the idea is the cat will associate getting wet with scratching furniture.

4. Using Citrus – Cats hate the smell of citrus. Try using citrus furniture polish or scented candles in areas you don't want the cat to scratch. Avoid liquid potpourri, it is toxic to pets.

5. Scratching Posts – Cats need an alternative to furniture for scratching. Provide sturdy scratching posts and reward cats for using them. Rub the post with cat nip and give yummy treats around the post to make it more attractive. Hanging swinging toys from the post will make it more fun. Always keep the post in an accessible area for kitty. Many homes will require more than one scratching post; remember cats are lazy and won't want to walk too far for a good scratching.

6. Nail Trimming – Keep the nails trimmed short so they will do less damage. Most cats will tolerate nail trimming with a little training or your veterinarian can trim the nails for a minimal fee.